

THE Badminton Bible

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Badminton rules

This article will teach you about the rules of badminton. It contains simple advice to help beginners get started with the game, as well as detailed information to educate experienced players.

The official rule book

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) maintains the official rules of the game. You can download a copy of [the latest rules](#) from their website.

The full document is 252 pages long, because it includes guidelines for organising or officiating tournaments, and other rip-roaring bureaucracy. The rules for players are only 10 pages long, and can be downloaded separately:

- Download [just the rules](#) (good for players)
- Download [the entire Handbook](#) (good for bureaucrats)

To read those documents, you may need to install software on your computer. For most people, [Adobe Reader](#) is a good choice.

This article is not a rule book

I've met few players who have read the BWF rule book. I think this is mainly because the rule book is long, dull, and difficult.

In this article, I will explain the rules in a way that makes sense to beginners, giving them just enough information to be confident playing badminton. Then I'll go into more detail, explaining aspects of the rules that experienced players often get wrong.

I'm not going to cover absolutely every rule in the book. There are **lots** of rules, and many of them are irrelevant to players. For example: do you really want to know how the rules define an acceptable badminton racket?

When I feel it's helpful, I shall back up my advice with a relevant quote from the rule book. I'll mainly do this for rules that players often get wrong, disagree over, or simply don't know.

I'm not going to do this all the time, because often it's **unhelpful**. The rules can be pretty stodgy. My purpose here is to teach; the rule book's purpose is to codify.

Here's an example quote and explanation. If you want, you can use the number to look up the rule:

The top of the net from the surface of the court shall be 1.524 metres at the centre of the court and 1.55 metres over the side lines for doubles.

It's impossible to completely prevent the net from sagging in the middle, so the rules define how much is correct. In practice, when setting up your own nets, just pull it as tight as you can. You're unlikely to make it too high; most nets at club level are too low.

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